

Arlington Council on Aging

Meeting Minutes November 19, 2020

Present: Michael Quinn, Nancy Cox, Anne Brown, Rick Fentin, Kristine Shah, Jill Greenlee, Pat Baillieul. Kristine Shaw, and Marge Vanderhill. **Absent:** Mary Hung Associates: Mara Klein Collins, Bob Tosi, Paul Raia, and Karen Nichols.
Joe Curro: BOS rep. **ASA rep:** Malcolm Hamilton

Public meetings are conducted remotely due to the COVID pandemic. This meeting was recorded.

1. Call to order: The regular meeting of the Council on Aging Board was called to order by Michael Quinn via Zoom at 6:00PM on November 19, 2020.
2. Citizen's open forum: none
3. Minutes of October 22, 2020, were approved. Pat Baillieul so moved and Rick seconded. Marge Vanderhill abstained.
4. Executive Director Report, Kristine Shah
 - a. **Nutrition and Food Access**
 - i. Successful transition to the new Arlington EATS hotline phone number took place. Arlington Eats phone number is 339-707-6761.
 - ii. The COA completed our annual SNAP audit last week
 - iii. We are excited to be increasing the number of hot turkey dinners we are delivering on Thanksgiving morning this year. So far, we have secured about 30 volunteers to deliver 150 dinners. Meals are being made by Something Savory this year with some ingredients sourced from Food Link and funding from the Retired Men's Club, NEATS and Arlington EATS. Puzzles collected by Maxima will also be included with the meal deliveries. All meals will be delivered in a contact free way for COVID safety.
 - iv. Our monthly Greater Boston Food Bank CSFP grocery distribution out of Drake continues monthly in a delivery method to 60 residents.
 - b. **Staying Connected and Supporting Older Residents**
 - i. Our fitness classes continue to be a great way for older adults to regularly engage and connect virtually. Tai Chi classes continue to be recorded and aired on ACMi.
 - ii. Other virtual programming continues to grow and expand including 8 new class offerings for December alone, including UCLA's "Brain Training" workshop co-hosted with the Lexington COA.
 - iii. We are partnering with one of our podiatrists, Dan Selligman, to offer a pilot podiatry clinic at his office in Medford. Podiatry appointments continue to be a frequent request from our residents.
 - iv. The COA is co-sponsoring and cross promoting a handful of relevant ACE (Arlington Community Education) classes geared toward our population.

- v. The 4th annual Intergenerational SAGE Table took place virtually on November 12 with 25 attendees. Live music was provided by Pronoun and meals were provided “grab and go” style by BrightView.
- vi. We received great feedback from our Pumpkin Patch drive through event in October. We were able to see lots of smiling faces of people who visited the center regularly pre-pandemic. It is our goal to continue these “grab and go” style events monthly and we have a holiday themed event scheduled for December.
- vii. Our Warm Wishes holiday gift bag program will continue this year with a plan to distribute gift bags to 100 older residents in the month of December. Maxima has partnered with us.
- viii. Fuel Assistance renewals are under way and we are experiencing an increase in numbers of new applicants.
- ix. Medicare Open Enrollment season is under way and SHINE volunteers have been busy assisting residents virtually. We conducted a zoom info session and
- x. have a recorded presentation airing on ACMi.

c. Flu Vaccines

- i. Due to the pandemic, Joanne Sliney, RN, COA nurse, completed hundreds of at home flu shots this year. We had designated days at each Senior Housing building for residents and also appointments for residents in individual homes.
- ii. For the first time, the COA partnered with Walgreens to provide high dose flu vaccines. On October 30, a tent was set up for any Arlington residents over age 60 to receive their vaccines and over 40 people attended.

d. Grant Updates

- i. We are in the process of applying for 3 new grants:
 - 1. \$20,000 from MAPC for Taxi/Livery transportation for older adults in Arlington.
 - 2. \$10,000 from CHNA 17 to fund transportation to mental health appointments and access to technology for virtual mental health appointments for Black/African American residents.
 - 3. \$10,000 from Lahey/BIDMC Health for Transportation.

e. Property Tax & Rent Relief Programs

- i. Applications have been updated and are available on the COA website for the 2020-21 Volunteer Tax Work off Program, Harry Barber Program and the Elderly and Disabled Tax Relief Fund. We currently have 3 spots remaining in the Volunteer Tax Work Off program for the upcoming year.
- ii. Rick Fentin and Michael Quinn hosted an informative virtual info session on Property Tax Deferral (41A) on November 12.

f. Other

- i. Thank you to board members who sent messages to state representatives regarding the budget. We have since heard that our request for level funding is expected to be fulfilled.
- ii. We are scheduled to move COA office staff to the 2nd floor on November 21. Under the current timeline construction should be completed by fall 2021 with move in November-December 2021.
- iii. Sub Committee for Dementia Friendly Arlington and Age Friendly next steps. Paul Raia and Karen Nichols have offered to be on the sub-committee.

- iv. New Board member recruitment update: Two candidates.
- v. Chrome book update: 40 plus 20 extra from the school dept. are available. Each needs to be set up with an email address. Some users need more assistance. The Housing Authority Buildings need internet access other than in the common rooms. Some options are Hot Spots or Com Cast has a simple internet package for those with low incomes.

5. Report of the Chair:

- a. The next presentation of the updated Tax Referral Program will be recorded.
- b. Anne Brown and Pat Baillieul will serve on the sub-committee for new board members. A vice chair is needed. Associate memberships need to be formalized.
- c. A Special Town meeting is in session now. A COA liaison is needed to serve on the police commission. The Police Chief also proposed forming a committee which would need a COA rep.
- d. Home Rule legislation is in the works so the town can reduce utility fees for qualified seniors.

6. Minuteman Senior Services

- a. Kelly Magee Wright, Executive Director, shared a letter of acknowledgement and praise to Cody Whitham, Residence Coordinator at Drake Village in Arlington. Cody advocates on behalf of tenants, provides leadership, and support to seniors living at Drake Village.
- b. The Board Development Committee will work with the Councils on Aging and the Executive Director to appoint Community Representative Directors and recruit Member-at-Large positions to the board
- c. Board Members shared updates with their COA from the following towns: Arlington, Bedford, Maynard, Winchester, and Woburn.
- d. Case managers have served 3006 consumers, which is 2.4% higher than FY19. The challenge in the homecare department is retaining workers in our vendor workforce. Information and referral have responded to nearly 7,000 calls in FY20. Nutrition operations have increased with the closing of senior dining sites. Minuteman continues daily Meals on Wheels service.

7. ASA liaison, Malcolm Hamilton, reporting. Exercise programs are on DVDs and can be borrowed by seniors without internet access.

8. A motion to adjourn at 7:05pm, was made by Jill and Pat seconded.